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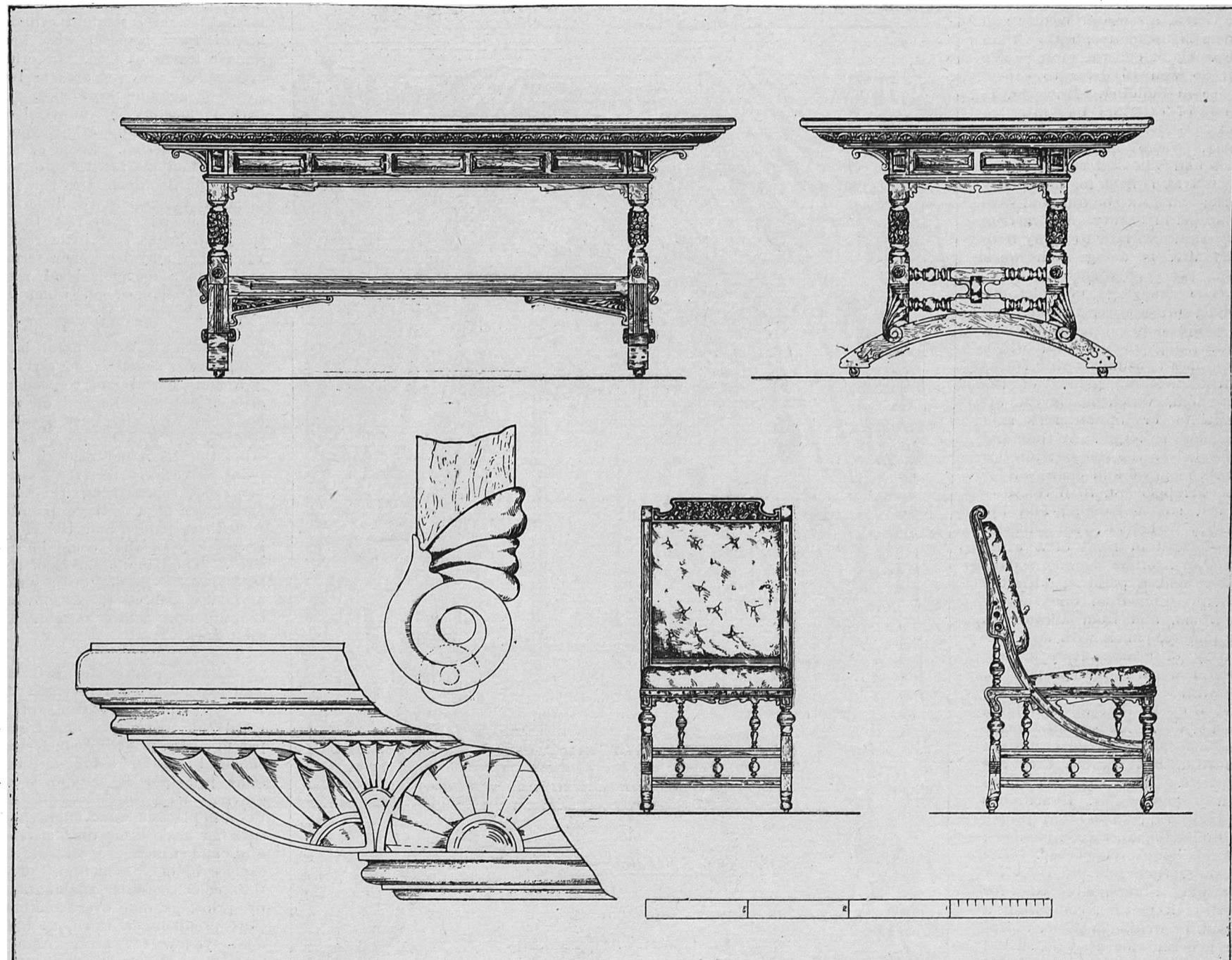
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SOME PASSING EVENTS.

AMONG the odd things that one finds in the museums and historical collections in Europe, and that he does not find in America, are handsome carriages—the “turnouts” which have been freighted with the salt of the earth, the divinely anointed, and with those unsalted and unanointed plebeians, commonly of the tender sex, who have ministered to regal and imperial pleasure. Quaint in form and ornament they are, and often clumsy in their lumbering bigness, but they suggest that we might have some carriages that are not as solemn as hearses and Venetian gondolas. In spite of the revival of color and decoration, male costume and private vehicles remain without improvement of form or color. Dullness of hue and ugliness of form come to be accepted after a time as among the things not intended to be different. The rash reformer who suggests improvement is looked upon much as we would look upon a man who would try to build another Pyramid, or check the flow of the Mississippi or of the Con-

improved appearance may prompt other cab owners to go and do something likewise. Imagine our carriages in rich maroons and turquoise blues, deep greens and royal purples, with decorations picked out in broader colors and touches of gold or silver! Yet that is nothing more than one may see among the old lumber of dead and gone royalty and nobility. The accounts, too, of carriages that appeared in the public streets of European cities in the last century tax our credulity, though they are well authenticated. There was Madame the Duchesse of Valentinois, for instance, who paraded up the drives of Paris in a coach almost made of beautifully painted Sevres porcelain, at least thickly paneled with it all over. Her horses were six in number, and wore harnesses of crimson silk embroidered in silver. This turnout excited the envy of “Lea Morphise,” one of the favorites of Louis XV. (whose son, by the way—Lea Morphise’s son, I mean, was the soldier who caused the drums to roll when the sixteenth Louis tried to address the crowd from the gallows), and this woman shortly trundled out into the parks in a carriage of marqueterie in brass and tortoise

the architectural style of the building. It is a better age to make restorations in than the last century when the rage for classic architecture led into all sorts of absurdities. Sir Christopher Wren did well enough when he was putting up a building, for there is coherence in his design, but when he repaired a Gothic structure by putting in a Greek door, or surrounding the clock with Greek scroll work, or erecting Ionic columns beside the doors, or fronting the structure with a Parthenon-like portico, his restorations amount to nothing but meddlesome interference. The architectural styles are better studied and understood and more wisely respected than they were a hundred years ago, and the only fault I find with modern restorers is that they sacrifice quaintness to beauty in doing away with the statues in the niches, and cutting off the weird gargoyle projecting from the roof and removing the equally quaint bosses from the groining of the vaults. Chester Cathedral, which will be remembered by most travelers as a dull, bare, barn-like structure, is still in the hands of renovators who have removed every one of the bandy-legged saints and broken-nosed kings



DINING ROOM FURNITURE.

gressional appropriations for that venerated stream. Yet, when the new-model appears, if it be a genuine improvement upon previous ones, everybody is surprised, then pleased, and shortly the thing becomes a new fashion. I had great hopes of Oscar Wilde. Don’t laugh; I regard him as a charlatan, but when he started out to reform our clothing he had an excellent field of labor, and the force of example should have opened our eyes to the superiority of Bunthorne raiment over the swallow tails and frock coats of to-day. While woman’s dress may rival the gorgeousness of the robes of Solomon, and while her surroundings may be the exemplification of richness and luxury, the male human still presents the aspect of a big beetle. He is black and white all over, a flower in his button hole, being all that he dares to “sport” in the way of positive color. Our carriages are appropriate only in funeral processions. It is true that a new cab company has suddenly flashed out upon us with carriages of glistening black and lemon yellow, and, though they are single among thousands, their

shell, such as one may see in those wonderful cabinets and tables in Warwick Castle. She was drawn by a team of black horses, caparisoned in crimson velvet laced with gold. Alas! She had hardly enjoyed her triumph for an hour before a smash occurred, and the pole of another carriage was driven through the delicate tortoise shell, and she went home in the wreck amid the jeers of the Parisians, who of course had to foot the bill.

THOSE who would see the grand old English cathedrals as the builders left them must make haste across the seas, for a most surprising mania for restoration has of late appeared. In every cathedral I have visited this summer I have found the mason, the carpenter, the window maker, the organ builder, the frescoer, and the mosaic worker in partial possession, and in some cases, as at Peterborough, the structure is forlornly open to the sky, and the long aisles echo to the clang of hammers and the shouts of workmen. I am bound to say that in most instances the decorations and restorations are in good taste and in keeping with

that formerly smiled down as blandly as Chinamen upon the visitor from niches in the outside wall. I don’t like that. The cathedral has less to prove its age now than when those queer old effigies were in place. The new additions are very well, but what sanction is there for the removals? The iconoclastic Puritans, who destroyed the beautiful statuary and ornamentation of these cathedrals as things that savored of Popery, and the dullards of a later century who caused the interiors to be painted and whitewashed, obliterating the curious frescoes and mural decorations made such changes in these structures that the modern is really giving back to them more of their original character and spirit than he is taking away. In particular is the element of color being given back in the form of gorgeous new frescos and mosaics and windows, which, I am bound to say, please me far better than the medieval decorations which are occasionally seen side by side with modern work. Among the edifices which have recently come under the operations of the decorator, is St. Paul’s in London.